

OLDER ADULTS, ADDICTIONS, AND TREATMENT

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

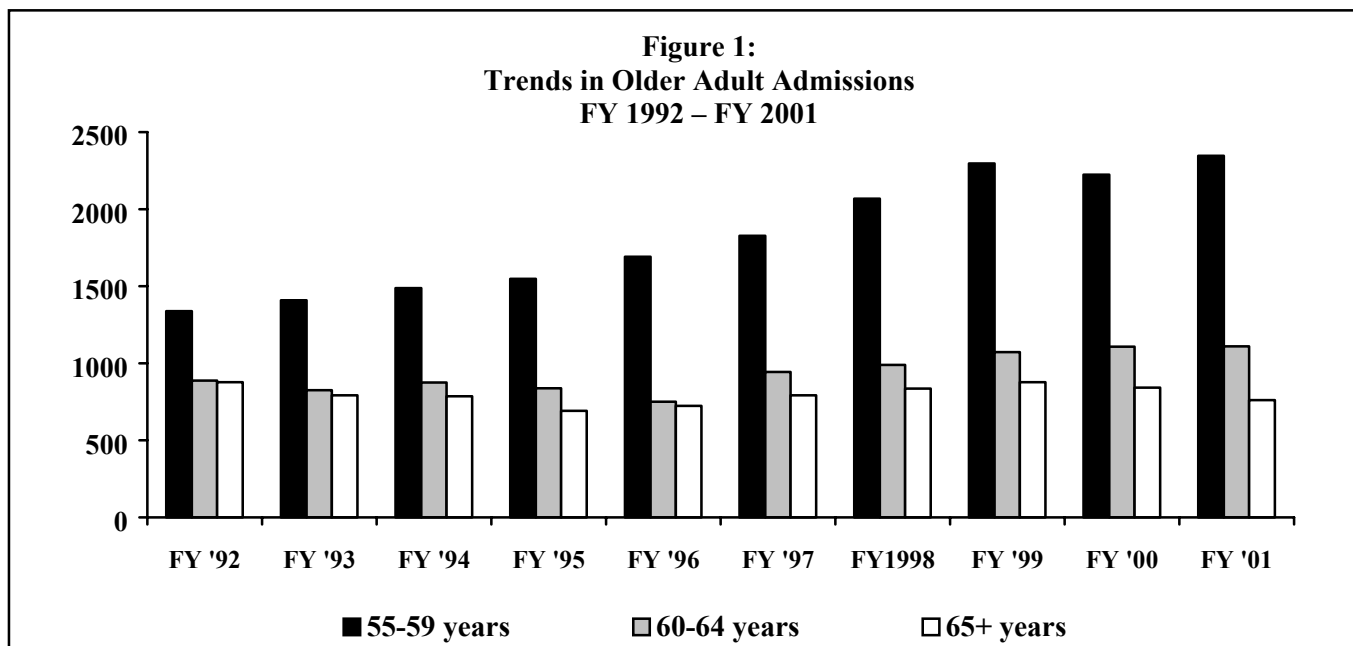
This fact sheet provides information on older adult admissions to substance abuse treatment services. Data were reported to the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS) Management Information System (SAMIS) in FY 2001.^{1,2}

Population Statistics:

- According to the 2000 Census, there were almost 34 million individuals 65 years and older, constituting over 12% of the total U.S. population. Over 4 million of these persons were 85 years and older. (Census, 2000)
- In Massachusetts alone, there were 860,162 individuals 65 years and older, making up almost 14% of the Commonwealth's total population. In 2000, as many as 116,692 residents were 85 years and older. (Census, 2000)
- It is predicted that as the "baby boomers" age, the older adult population will more than double nationally by 2030. It is also predicted that this population explosion will be accompanied by a dramatic increase in the number of elderly alcohol abusers and substance use related health problems. (SAMHSA CSAT TIP Series #26, 2001)

Treatment Admissions:

- In FY2001, 4,216 individuals age 55 and over were admitted for treatment within Massachusetts Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS) licensed substance abuse treatment facilities.³ There has been a steady increase in admissions of clients age 55+. (Figure 1)
- Of the 4,216 older adults admitted to BSAS licensed substance abuse treatment facilities in FY2001; 2,347 admissions were 55-59 years old, 1,109 were 60-64 years old, and 760 were 65 years and older.



¹ SAMIS data include information reported by all BSAS licensed substance abuse treatment programs for FY 1992 to FY 2001. These data include admissions to BSAS licensed programs that may be reimbursed by Medicaid or other public payers. Trends are reported beginning in FY 1992 when data were first collected in their current form.

² This fact sheet may contain small numbers. Trends based upon small numbers should be interpreted with caution.

³ Those older adults who disclose substance abuse related problems to their primary care physicians (PCP) and seek services only through their PCP are not represented in these numbers.

Types of Services:

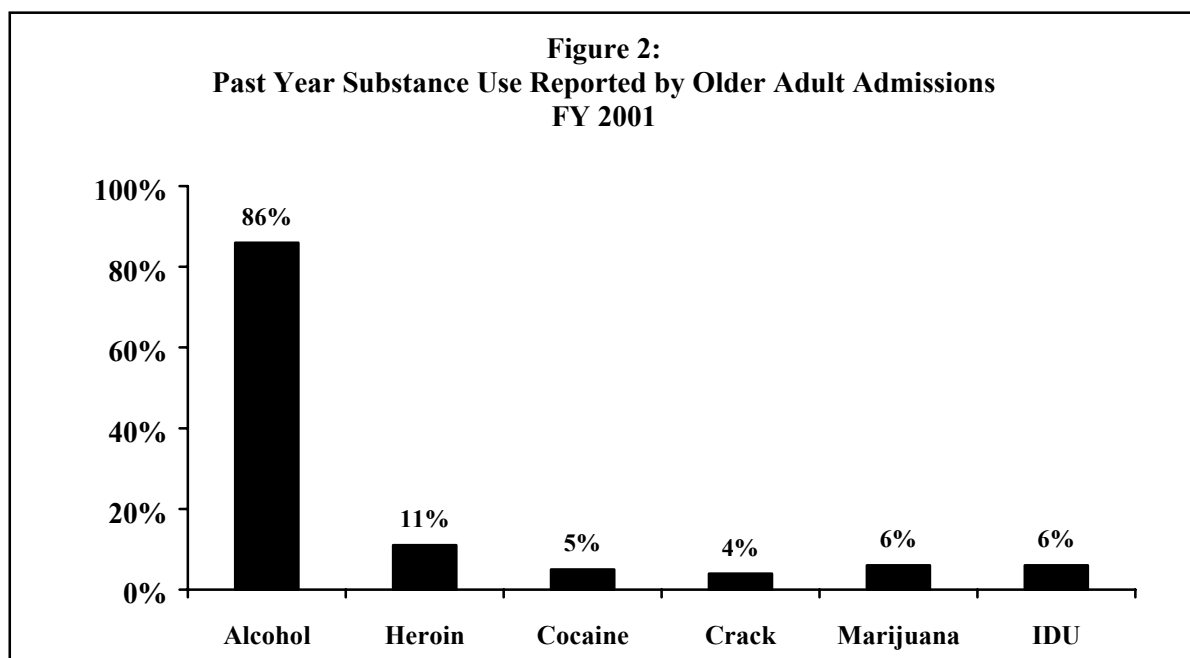
In FY2001, admissions age 55 and older received services in the following modalities:

- 45% (1,901) received acute treatment services (ATS).
- 15% (631) participated in drunk driver education.
- 3% (110) participated in recovery home services.
- 38% (1,504) of older adult admissions participated in other services including therapeutic community services, day treatment services, and compulsive gambling education.

Substances Used in the Past Year:

In FY2001, alcohol was the most reported past year substance of use reported among older adult admissions.

- 86% of older adult admissions reported using alcohol within the past 12 months.
- 11% reported past year heroin use.
- 5% reported past year cocaine use.
- 4% reported past year crack use.
- 5% reported past year marijuana use.
- Past year injected drug use was reported by (6%) of the older adult admissions in FY2001.



Prepared by:

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